

Sheila Klinker

Indiana State Representative, District 27



Summer, 2001



Dear Friends:

The 2001 long session of the Indiana General Assembly has ended with the passage of a new state budget and several other important pieces of legislation. I am pleased we completed our work on time in a bipartisan manner.

The new two-year state budget includes increased funding for education, CHOICE and other important programs while avoiding a general tax increase. The budget also includes funding for several important local projects that are detailed inside this newsletter.

We passed several other laws that will benefit our state in a variety of areas, including health care, education, crime, election reform and environmental protection. We made improvements to our license branch operations and passed legislation that will protect consumers from annoying telephone calls with the establishment of a do-not-call list. I have described many of these new laws in the next few pages.

In addition, you will find a map of our new legislative district. We are required to redraw the district boundaries every 10 years due to population shifts. I welcome those of you who are new to the district and look forward to working with you in the coming months to make Indiana a better place to live. I also am very sorry to lose some of my former constituents, but I needed to lose some population and get my numbers down to 60,800.

Please contact my office if you have additional concerns or questions about state government. You may e-mail me at H27@ai.org or call toll-free at 1-800-382-9842.

Sincerely,

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New budget increases school support, local development

Going into the 2001 legislative session, many observers felt that a sluggish economy would make it difficult to enact a biennial state budget without either passing a general tax increase or cutting funding for critical areas like public education. However, the budget bill that became law continues our record of avoiding general tax increases, while providing additional state support to our schools, health care and local projects.

The final version of House Enrolled Act 1001 enables the state to increase support for public schools across Indiana by an average of 3.5 percent each of the next two fiscal years, with minimum guarantees built in to help schools avoid cutting programs and personnel. Funding for higher education was increased by an average of 3.2 percent each year.

Services and local development

The budget includes additional funding for the CHOICE program that provides in-home care services for the elderly and disabled, as well as Build Indiana Fund support for research and technology, community wastewater and drinking water grants, airport development and improvements to voting systems.

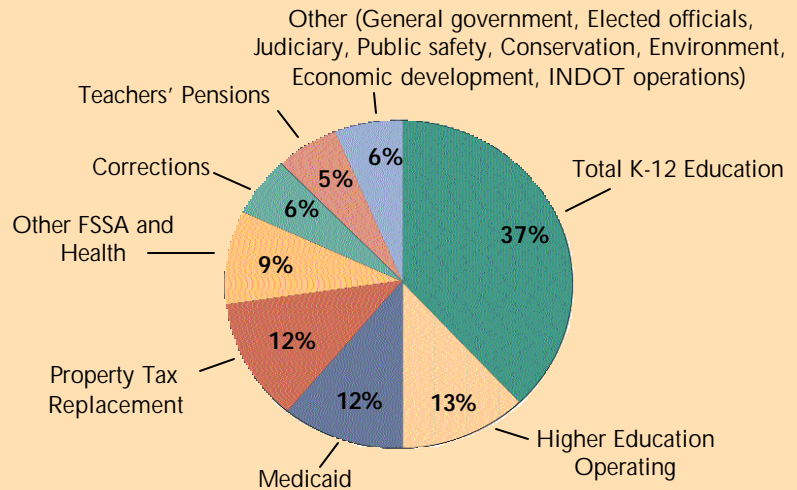
Tax relief

It was disappointing that we were unable to provide the levels of tax relief that were included in past state budgets, but I am pleased that we were able to extend the life of the homestead credit at 10 percent and maintain the earned income tax credit that assists working families on lower incomes.

Businesses and farms will receive an income tax credit on personal property beginning in 2003, and mobile homes have been changed to be treated as real property, with tax deductions not exceeding 50 percent of their assessed value. The budget bill continues to fund a statewide property tax relief program that now takes about 16 percent off all property taxes. When coupled with the 10 percent homestead credit, that translates to savings of around 26 percent.

In closing, considering the fiscal restraints facing legislators going into the 2001 session, I believe that this budget is a major accomplishment.

Spending highlights from the 2001-2003 budget



Build Indiana Funds for our region

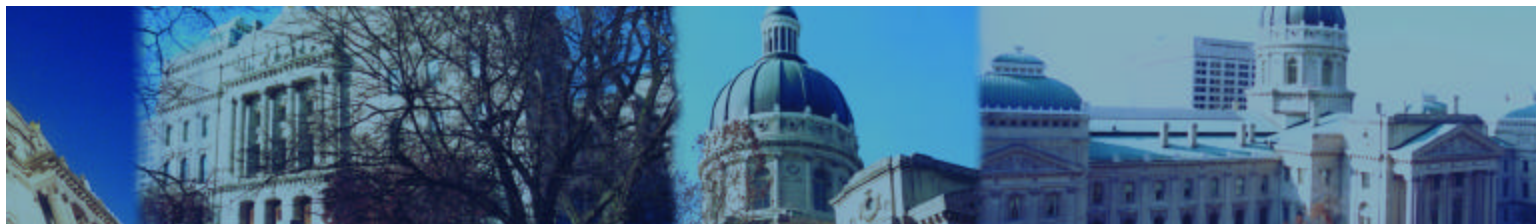
The projects listed below include the Build Indiana Funds from all of the legislators in our region.

- Wabash River Heritage Corridor: \$4,000,000
- Scientific Instruments: \$2,500,000
- Krannert Building: \$2,000,000
- Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage: \$1,000,000
- Ivy Tech Library: \$160,000
- Lafayette Adult Reading Academy: \$150,000
- Indiana Council for Economic Education: \$15,000
- Imagination Station: \$40,000
- Duncan Hall: \$15,000
- Long Center for the Performing Arts: \$40,000
- Mid-Land Meals, Inc.: \$25,000
- Museums at Prophetstown: \$180,000
- Purdue Univ. Agriculture Hall: \$50,000
- Riverside Ice Rink: \$250,000
- Sycamore Girl Scout Council: \$40,000
- Sycamore Valley Program Center: \$122,000
- Tippecanoe Public Library: \$185,000
- Tippecanoe Co. Arts Foundation: \$50,000
- Wabash Valley Historic Preservation Society: \$20,000
- West Lafayette Parks & Recreation: \$150,000
- Tippecanoe Co. Jail remodeling project: \$10,000
- Regional Training Center: \$80,000
- Indiana Veterans Home Learning Center: \$20,000



THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HONORED DREW BRES FOR WINNING THE MAXWELL AWARD AND THE PURDUE FOOTBALL TEAM FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE ROSE BOWL. PICTURED ARE DREW BRES AND COACH JOE TILLER.

- Lauramie Twp. Fire Dept.: \$50,000
- Dayton Elem. School Playground: \$25,000
- Dayton Elem. P.T.O.: \$26,000
- Clarks Hill Community Center Fire Station: \$35,000
- Clarks Hill Volunteer Fire Dept.: \$25,000
- Battle Ground Summer Recreation Project: \$10,000
- Dayton Gazebo Project: \$26,350



Klinker legislation benefits people of District 27

I was very pleased during this session to author several bills that directly benefit people in our region, including House Enrolled Act 2009, which combines the Tippecanoe County board of elections and the Tippecanoe County board of registration to form the **Tippecanoe County Board of Elections and Registration**. The new board will have all the powers and duties of the county election board, the board of registration and the county executive. Members will consist of one person appointed by the county chairman from each of the major political parties in the county, and the circuit court clerk, who will serve as an ex officio member of the board.

Enterprise zones are those urban areas of the state in the greatest need. HEA 2130 qualifies someone living in an enterprise zone for a wage deduction if he or she works for a not-for-profit entity or local, state or federal government.

In addition to the tax deduction, the law extends the date for which enterprise zones can be established from June 1 to June 16, and does not require earlier enterprise zone users to file their paperwork unnecessarily with the state a second time. The law states that if an enterprise zone business does not file the required verified summary of tax credits and tax exemptions on time, the business waives those credits and exemptions unless it pays the penalty.

Included in the enterprise zone law is an extension of the **Individual Development Account** program. This allows Hoosiers on moderate and lower incomes to acquire state matching funds for buying a home, starting a business or sending a child to college.

Another law of interest to our community is SEA 171, which I sponsored in the House. After five years of effort, the bill establishing a system for the **regulation of athletic agents** has become law. Recommended to me by Coach Gene Keady, the law requires athletic agents to register with the state Office of the Attorney General. The law contains many provisions regarding the protection of high schools, universities and their student athletes.

Finally, HEA 2111 raises the offense of **exploitation of a dependent or an endangered adult** from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class D felony if the adult is at least 60 years old and has lost personal property totaling more than \$1,000. The law was sparked by some recent events that took place in our district. The elderly population is quickly increasing and we must enact laws to protect the interests of these people.

Charter schools and new kindergarten date

After several years of debate, legislators finally agreed to pass a bill that will allow charter schools in the state of Indiana. These are independent schools that are able to design their own curriculums and control their own spending without worrying about state authority.

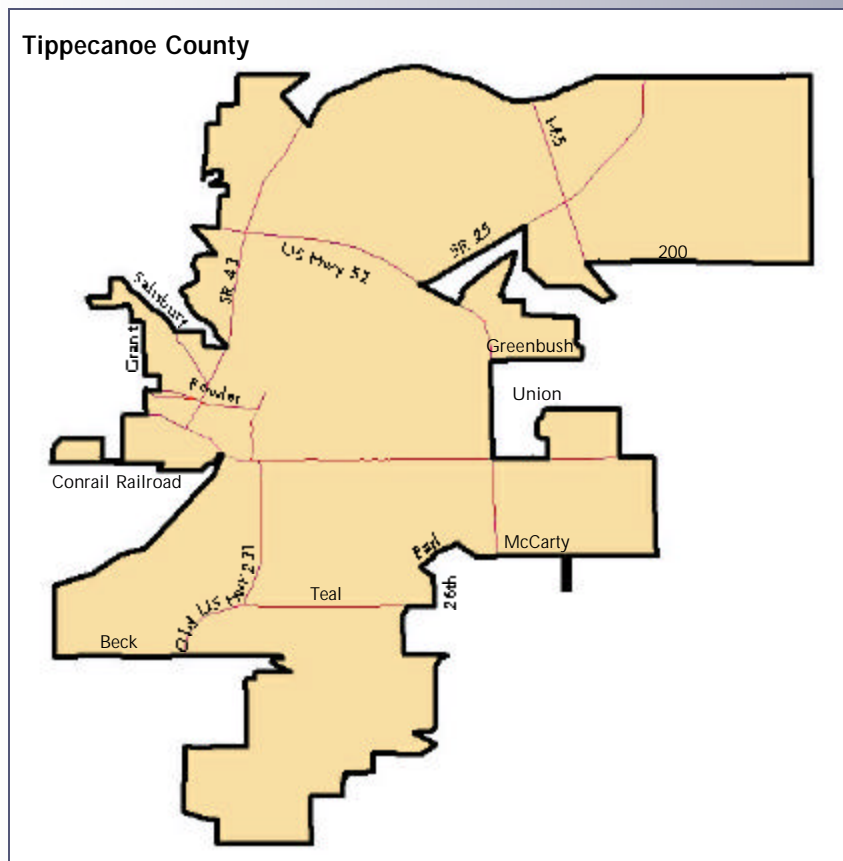
Under Senate Enrolled Act 165, three groups have the ability to sponsor charter schools: local school boards, Indiana's public universities and the mayor of Indianapolis. Those entities will be required to set up

their own criteria for establishing the schools, and advocates hope that sponsors can begin accepting applications from interested parties before the end of this year. These applications must be voted on by the local school board.

New kindergarten date

Children who turn five years of age by July 1 will be able to attend kindergarten classes that fall through a provision included in the state budget. Previously, a child had to be five by June 1.

The new look of District 27



During this year's session you may have heard about redistricting in the news. After each census, the Indiana General Assembly is required by law to redraw House, Senate and Congressional district boundaries according to population changes.

District boundaries are very complicated, and it took months of effort and plenty of debate among legislators. In the end, however, I feel that the district lines we have drawn are as fair as possible.

For both the current members and those new to the district, I look forward to serving you. Please contact me if you have questions about the district or any other matters.

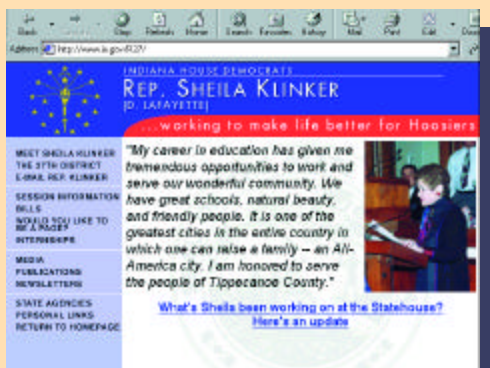


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Privacy from telemarketers and election reform

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and other issues online with
Representative Klinker



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In 2001, lawmakers took steps to help reduce the interruption of telemarketers calling you at home. Through House Enrolled Act 1222, you will be able to have your name placed on a do-not-call list that will **prohibit most solicitors from contacting you via the telephone**. To be placed on the list, contact the Office of the Indiana Attorney General about the **Telephone Privacy List** at 1-888-834-9969.

In the wake of the confusion that took place in the presidential election in Florida last fall, lawmakers in Indiana moved quickly to enact reforms that will change the way we handle elections here.

Senate Enrolled Act 268 gives counties the ability to enter into agreements with the state to purchase **upgraded voting equipment**. This allows counties to take

advantage of the state's ability to purchase large amounts of equipment and materials at discounted prices. Funds contained in the biennial state budget will help the state provide 50 percent matching grants to further reduce those costs. The same legislation also **eliminates the use of punch-card voting** in future elections.

Through provisions contained in House Enrolled Act 1510, the state has moved closer to improving voter registration in Indiana. The Indiana Election Division will make a **voter registration form available on the Internet** that people can download, fill out and mail in to be processed. The legislation also strives to update lists of eligible voters by removing names of people who are deceased and convicted felons who are in prison.